

SPECIFICATION

TITLE

"PACKAGE INCLUDING PROMOTION OR CONTEST INFORMATION"

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to packaging. More particularly, the present invention relates to packaging for storing and dispensing consumable products.

The packaging for consumable or confectionery products is very important to the look, marketing and storage of the product. There are practical facets to packaging consumable products, namely, keeping the products from being damaged during shipping, keeping the products fresh, and in certain instances providing a reusable package. Very often, in addition to text on the packaging, the packaging also attempts to visually convey a message about the type of product, the taste of the product or the purpose of the product. In marketing the product, packaging can convey other information. For instance, marketing consumable products sometimes includes ancillary items, such as prize giveaways, sweepstakes and the like.

It has been known to provide packaging that provides a promotion material, prize, or giveaway. For example, cereal boxes have for quite some time contained small prizes. The prize induces some people to purchase and/or more quickly consume the product. Other consumable products come with coupons for the associated product. Coupons also induce the customer to buy the product and to repurchase the product at a later time using the coupon. Consumable products can also come with cash rebates, which induce purchasing. The prizes, coupons and rebates typically include a separate package or leaflet that inserts into a box with the product or between the box and an outer layer of packaging.

Soft drink packaging has also made use of the bottle cap to provide information about prizes and giveaways. Bottled soft drinks are sold through a variety of marketing channels including supermarket stores, convenience stores and vending machines. Not all of these channels use the same packaging. For instance, convenience stores and especially supermarkets package bottled soft drinks in twelve packs and cases, while vending machines dispense only single units of bottled soft drinks. To run a contest or

sweepstakes including all bottled soft drinks, the bottles must themselves include the contest or sweepstakes information. That is, placing the information inside the 12-pack or case container would exclude vending machine sales.

5 Confectionery products, such as gum or candy, are likewise sold in various marketing channels including supermarket stores, convenience stores and vending machines. It would be desirable to have giveaways, sweepstakes, contests, etc. for confectionery products.

10 While bottled soft drinks have made use of the bottle cap for providing giveaway or sweepstakes information, confectionery packaging typically has not provided a viable technique for providing giveaway or sweepstakes information. One of the problems with providing a confectionery package, e.g., a chewing gum product having a foil wrapper, is that the foil is used to store the sticks of chewing gum until all of the product is consumed. Thus, if the giveaway information is contained on the inner body of the wrapper, the eager consumer is encouraged to destroy the housing to see the prize
15 information and at the same time destroy the housing for the confectionery products, e.g., the sticks of chewing gum.

It is therefore desirable to provide a package for a confectionery product, such as a gum product, that includes information concerning giveaways, sweepstakes, contests, etc, wherein the package can be distributed through each of the product's
20 marketing channels.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an improved product holding and dispensing package. More specifically, the present invention provides a package and method by
25 which a gum product can include information concerning giveaways, sweepstakes, contests, etc.

To this end, in an embodiment, a gum package having giveaway information is provided. The gum package includes a body defining an interior for housing product. The body defines opposing end walls. A member is attached to the body, whereby
30 a consumer can grasp the member to remove one of the end walls. The removable end wall allows the consumer to remove a gum product from the body. The removable end

wall has an inner surface. The consumer can see the giveaway information by viewing the inner surface.

In an embodiment, the body includes a pair of opposing side walls in addition to the opposing end walls.

5 In an embodiment, the member is a tab.

In an embodiment, the tab attaches to a ribbon of material that extends around the body. When the consumer moves the tab, the ribbon tears the body to remove the removable end wall.

10 In an embodiment, the body is a thin sheet folded to produce the opposing end walls.

In an embodiment, the package is constructed, at least in part, from a metal foil.

In an embodiment, the giveaway information informs the consumer whether or not the consumer has won a prize.

15 In an embodiment, the giveaway information includes information concerning a sweepstakes, a raffle, a contest, a coupon or a rebate.

In an embodiment, the giveaway information is printed onto an inner surface of the removable end wall of the body.

In an embodiment, the giveaway information is stamped onto an inner surface of the removable end wall of the body.

20 In an embodiment, the removable end wall of the body includes a separate insert having the giveaway information.

In an embodiment, the giveaway information in combination with other giveaway information from at least one other package yields a prize for the consumer.

In an embodiment, the body houses a plurality of the gum products.

25 In another embodiment of the present invention, a flexible package including a foil wrapper having giveaway information for a confectionery product is provided. The package includes a bottom end, a removable end, and side walls that define an interior. A consumable product is located within the package. Giveaway information is visible by viewing a surface of a removable end. Means are provided to allow a
30 consumer to grasp and remove the end wall and view the giveaway information.

In an embodiment, the tab is integral to the sheet.

In an embodiment, the surface is an inner surface of the body. The tab enables the consumer to grasp the tab and remove the end wall from the body to view the giveaway information on the inner surface.

5 In an embodiment, the giveaway information is printed onto the surface of the end wall.

In an embodiment the body includes a plurality of side walls.

In an embodiment, the sheet includes a paper layer.

10 In an embodiment, the end wall includes folds and the giveaway information is disposed on the folds.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, a method for providing a gum package having giveaway information is provided. The method includes providing a package including a body defining an interior and a removable end to allow a consumer to access a product contained within the package. The method includes providing
15 giveaway information on an inner surface of the removable wall.

In an embodiment, the method includes providing a means for removing the end wall portion having the giveaway information.

An advantage of the present invention is to provide an improved gum package having giveaway information.

20 Another advantage of the present invention is to provide an improved giveaway information device.

Further, an advantage of the present invention is to provide an improved method for making a confectionery package having giveaway information.

25 Moreover, an advantage of the present invention is to provide an improved package having giveaway information and method therefore, which is cost effective and easy to implement with existing packaging systems.

Additional features and advantages of the present invention will be described in and apparent from the detailed description of the presently preferred embodiments.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of one embodiment of a package having a removable end wall that contains giveaway information.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment for the end wall of the present invention.

Figure 3 is an exploded perspective view of the package of the present invention showing the end wall removed an one embodiment of the giveaway information.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENTLY PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

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Referring now to the drawings and in particular to Figure 1, an embodiment of the package 10 of the present invention is illustrated. The gum package 10 includes a body 12. The body 12 in an embodiment is a thin sheet that includes one or more layers. The one or more layers may be a thin paper product and may include a thin metal or plastic foil adhered to the paper product. The foil provides a barrier against liquids or gases that could otherwise come into harmful contact with the consumable or confectionery products housed within the package 10. In an embodiment, the thin sheet folds together to form the shape of the body 12.

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In an embodiment, the body 12 has a rectangular shape. The rectangular shape includes a top wall 14, a bottom wall 16, side walls 18 and 20 and end walls 22 and 24. Although a rectangular shape is preferred, in alternative embodiments the body 12 can be cylindrical, triangular or have any other shape. In each of the embodiments, the body 12 includes at least one of the end walls 22 and 24.

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As illustrated in Figure 1, the thin sheet that folds to produce the body 12 yields overlapping folds as seen on the end wall 24. The body 12 includes a tab or member 28 that enables a consumer to grasp and pull the tab 28 to tear open the walls of the body 12 and remove the end wall 24 or an end wall portion 24 from the body 12.

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Thus, in one embodiment, the end wall 24 includes overlapping folds as illustrated in Figure 1. Other walls such as the bottom wall 16 or the side walls 12 and 18 can also include overlapping folds of the sheet that makes up the body 12. In an embodiment, the folds also include a suitable adhesive that maintains the body 12 in the

desired shape until the consumer opens the gum package 10. The gum package 10 also includes a plurality of gum products 26 that reside within. The body 12 and the package 10 in a preferred embodiment are flexible and strong enough to house the gum products 26 until the consumer consumes each of the same. The gum products 26 can be sticks of gum as illustrated or can be blocks of gum or have any desired shape. The gum products 26 are also in a preferred embodiment individually packaged in separate wrappers.

Referring now to Figure 2, an alternative embodiment of the end wall 24 is illustrated. The body 12 is again formed by folding a thin paper or multiple layer sheet to form a desired shape. The body 12 again includes the top wall 14, the bottom wall 16, the side walls 18 and 20, the end wall 24 and the member or tab 28. In this alternative embodiment, however, the end wall does not include folds or folded layers of the sheet comprising the body 12. The sheet may in fact be folded but the folds occur along other walls of the body 12, wherein the end wall 24 is smooth and uninterrupted.

Referring now to Figure 3, the package 10 of Figures 1 and 2 is shown with the end wall 24 removed from the remainder of the body 12. A ribbon of preferably strong tensile material 30 attaches to an inner surface of the body 12 and aligns with the member or tab 28. The ribbon 30 extends substantially around or all the way around the body 12. When the consumer pulls the tab 28, the ribbon 30 tears a strip 32 from the body 12 of the package 10.

The removed strip 32 separates the end wall 24 from the remainder of the body 12. It should be appreciated that the ribbon 30 is one known way in which the end wall 24 can separate from the body 12. The present invention includes any known method for opening a gum package 10. Preferably, however, the method employed produces an end wall 24 or end wall portion 24 separate from the body 12 and the products 26.

As illustrated in Figure 3, the end wall 24 can include a portion of the top wall 14, the bottom wall 16 and the side walls 18 and 20 of the body 12. In other embodiments, the end wall 24 may simply include a flat inner surface 34 and an outer surface. In either case the giveaway information or indicia 36 in a preferred embodiment appears on the inner surface 34 of the end wall 24. When the end wall has folds as illustrated in Figure 1, the giveaway information or indicia 36 can be preprinted,

stamped or etched onto one of the folds or the indicia can be printed, stamped or etched onto a plurality of folds that form the end wall 24. When the end wall 24 includes a smooth and uninterrupted surface as illustrated in Figure 2, the indicia 36 is preprinted onto the inner surface 34 in a preferred embodiment.

5 The member or tab 28 in one embodiment is integral to one of the sides of the body 12. Depending on the amount of the top and bottom walls and side walls of the body that the manufacturer wishes to incorporate into the end wall 24, the tab 28, ribbon 30 and accompanying strip 32 can be placed closer to the end wall 24 as desired. In another alternative embodiment, the end wall 24 is perforated or otherwise predisposed
10 to tear away from the remainder of the body 12. Here, the consumer may be able to remove the end wall without the need for a member or tab 28.

 The member 28 includes any means known to those of skill in the art for enabling the consumer to tear open the package 10. For instance, the member 28 alternatively includes only the ribbon 30, which enables the consumer to remove the
15 wall 24. The member 28 can also include an external ribbon material that extends around the body 12 of the package 10.

 Further alternatively, the end wall 24 removably attaches to the body 12, wherein a separate layer of packaging (not illustrated) holds the end wall 24 to the remainder of the body 12. When the extra layer of packaging, which in an embodiment is a thin clear
20 layer of plastic, is permanently removed from the body 12, the consumer can remove the end wall 24 and view the indicia 36 on the inner wall 34 of the end wall 24. Still further, the extra wrapper can be colored or otherwise opaque and hide giveaway information or indicia 36 that appears on an outer surface of the end wall 24 or on any outer surface of the body 12 including the top wall 14, bottom wall 16, side walls 18 and 20 or end
25 wall 22.

 The end wall 24 defines the inner surface 34. In a preferred embodiment the inner surface includes the giveaway information 36. As used herein, "giveaway information" includes any indicia or symbols that indicate or provide information about a contest, sweepstakes, coupon, raffle, rebate or any other type of monetary giveaway
30 or provision of prizes. The giveaway information 36 can also combine with other information from end walls 24 of other one or more packages 10 to provide a prize, e.g.,

for a contest or other type of game. In the illustrated embodiment, the indicia 36 is the word, "WINNER." In an embodiment, the information 36 informs the consumer whether the consumer has won or not won a prize or giveaway.

In an embodiment, the giveaway information 36 is printed onto the inner surface
5 34 of the end wall 24. Alternatively, the giveaway information 36 is stamped or etched onto the inner surface 34 of the end wall 24. Still further, a separate insert (not illustrated) having printed or stamped giveaway information 36 can be placed inside the package 10 at or near the removable end wall 24. When the consumer opens the package 10 and removes the end wall 24, the separate insert comes free from the body
10 12 with the end wall 24.

It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention and without diminishing its attendant advantages.